



**Kentucky Transportation Cabinet
Office of Highway Safety**

For Immediate Release

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Law enforcement to focus on motorcycle safety

Traffic fatalities are down – except for riders of motorcycles

FRANKFORT, Ky. (April 14, 2010) — The Kentucky Office of Highway Safety (KOHS) announced today that law enforcement agencies across the state are focusing on the safety of motorcycle riders through strict enforcement of all traffic laws.

As part of a region-wide effort, on the weekend of April 17-18, 2010, Kentucky will conduct focused law enforcement efforts concentrating on speeding, improper licensure, drinking and riding, and other infractions that are major risks to the safety of motorcyclists. The initiative is in response to recent data showing a general decline in traffic fatalities overall, but a surge in deaths and injuries among motorcycle riders.

In Kentucky last year, 78 of the 791 highway fatalities were motorcyclists. Of those fatalities, 47 were not wearing a helmet and 15 involved alcohol.

“Everyone, both motorists and motorcyclists, must learn to share the road,” said KOHS Executive Director Chuck Geveden. “No matter what you are driving or riding, it is your responsibility to follow all traffic laws and practice safe driving behaviors.”

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2008, 5,290 motorcyclists were killed—an increase of 2 percent over the 5,174 who died in 2007. There were 96,000 motorcyclists injured during 2008.

“Motorcycles make up less than three percent of all registered vehicles in the U.S., and less than one percent of vehicle miles traveled. Yet in 2008, they accounted for 14 percent of total traffic fatalities, 17 percent of all occupant fatalities, and four percent of all occupants injured,” said Elizabeth A. Baker, Ph.D., NHTSA’s Region 3 Regional Administrator.

“Per mile traveled, motorcyclists are about 37 times more likely than passenger car occupants to die in a traffic crash,” Dr. Baker said. “Unlike passenger cars, there’s no protection on a motorcycle, which greatly increases the likelihood of being seriously injured or killed in an incident.”

“Even though Kentucky does not have a helmet law, wearing a helmet significantly reduces the chance of injury or death,” Geveden added. “We encourage all motorcyclists to wear a DOT-approved helmet each and every ride.”

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